

DBVI
STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (SRC)
Final Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2012

9:30 a.m. Registration and Coffee

10:00 a.m. Welcome and Call to Order – **Melanie Brunson**

Introductions/ Representation:

Members Present: Melanie Brunson-Vienna, VA (Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council/representative of disability advocacy groups), Michael G. Davis-Chesapeake (Vice Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council/former recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services), Doug Powell-Falls Church, VA (former recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services), Valerie Walker-Norfolk, VA (representative of parents/guardian of child with a disability), Angie Matney (former recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services), John Bailey-Fairfax, VA (business, labor, and industries), and James Taylor-Richmond, VA (representative of disability advocacy groups).

Members Absent: Claudie Grant, Jr.-Colonial Heights, VA (business, labor, and industries), Marguerite Bardone (business, labor, and industries); Rick Holley-Hallwood, VA (representative of disability advocacy groups), and Debbie Pfeiffer-Yorktown, VA (Department of Education).

Guests Present: Ken Jessup-Virginia Beach, VA (representative from the SILC), and Ellen A. McIlhenny-Richmond, VA (representative from the Department of Rehabilitation Services-State Rehabilitation Council); and Faye Adams-Virginia Beach, VA (former SRC Council Member and employee at VOPA).

DBVI Staff Present: Raymond Hopkins- (Commissioner of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired); Bob Burton- (Deputy Commissioner for Services); Susan Davis Payne- (Director of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program), and Marcus L. Byrd II- (Support Staff).

Adoption of Agenda-Action Item:

Melanie Brunson entertained a motion to adopt the agenda from the SRC meeting convened on 3 March 2012. Angie Matney voiced the 1ST motion, and was seconded by Doug Powell with a correction to be made to the 11 o'clock times from pm to am. The agenda was passed by unanimous voice vote and adopted as corrected.

Approval of December 2011 Meeting Minutes-Action Item:

Melanie Brunson called for a motion to approve the 10 December 2011 SRC meeting minutes. A motion was made by Doug Powell, and seconded by Jim Taylor. The meeting minutes was passed by unanimous voice vote and adopted as distributed.

10:10 a.m.

Comments from the Public: Melanie Brunson called for any comments from the public asking once, twice, and a third time, no comments made and therefore declared closed.

New Member Orientation-Action Item:

Due to scheduling issues including low attendance of new members and lack of SRC Member appointments, the new member orientation scheduled for February 10, 2012 was postponed. Melanie Brunson called for a motion to convene the orientation on the Friday before the next SRC meeting in June.

Action Taken: Michael Davis, Valarie Walker, John Bailey, and Jim Taylor all agreed that 1 June 2012 would suffice in serving as the day for the new member orientation. Additionally, all current members were encouraged by Commissioner Hopkins to participate as well.

10:15 a.m.

Commissioner's Report-Raymond E. Hopkins:

The House Bill that was amended which proposed the consolidation of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired with the Department of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Department of Aging, and the Department of Rehabilitation to form a new agency has been forwarded to the Senate, in which they ultimately decided not to adopt. Senate bill 678 does not include consolidating the DBVI nor the Department of Deaf and Hard of Hearing; however the House bill includes the previous mentioned agencies as well as the Department of Aging, Department of Social Services, and the Department of Rehabilitative Services. Essentially both chambers decided to move forward with the original bills each had passed for government reform and restructuring and the bills have been moved to conference. Conferees have been identified and are as follows: Representation from the House-Jones, James and Gilbert; Representation from the Senate- McDougall, Peterson, and Martin.

Furthermore, Commissioner Hopkins elaborated on other legislation that could potentially impact the Better Enterprise Program and vending facility program which include reforms and local mandates. House bill 1295 and Senate bill 679 were introduced to exempt localities from giving priority to individuals who are blind and eligible to operate vending stands on public properties; conference is set to take place.

According to news reports there has been an impasse in regards to the budget for the next biennium in which the House approved a new budget bill and if rejected by the Senate it could result with early adjournment by the General Assembly.

Upcoming Events: On 2 April 2012, the newly renovated Virginia Industries for the Blind facility in Richmond will conduct a grand reopening/open house event. Governor McDonald has been invited to attend, along with other local elected officials. Additionally, on 16 May 2012 the grand opening for the newly renovated rehabilitation center on the DBVI Richmond campus will take place as well.

Efforts are being made within the Senate to pass a surface transportation bill and in all likelihood it will take place at some point this year. Members of Congress have expressed some interest with opening safety rest areas to commercialization. In addition, proposals have been made to alter legislation which allows vendors to operate vending machines in those areas as well. There are concerns of the potential negative effects the commercialization could have on vending managers; which has prompted consumers to voice their opinions to encourage individuals to oppose the proposed bill: *Further information has been requested and will be forwarded to the SRC council.*

Jim Taylor inquired about the DBVI's Vocational Rehabilitation Program not receiving any additional general fund money and if other programs within the agency would have any increase in funding?

Commissioner Hopkins explained that a proposal has been introduced to increase the appropriation for the Virginia Industries for the Blind. Essentially, the budget as proposed which will bring to light the expenditures exceeding the budget over the past few years might potentially result in a 7 million dollar increase, more specifically the permission to spend the additional funds. In addition, in the event that a power outage occurred, money has been given to put generators on DBVI campus through the mastery equipment lease program to make those purchases.

10:30 a.m.

Deputy Commissioner's Report-Bob Burton:

Bob Burton elaborated on the standards and indicators, specifically the fact that they only reflect the 1st quarter percentages and what they represent. Further information will be forwarded to the council in regards to this matter.

The SRC requested that DBVI provide information regarding the current Order of Selection (OOS) Categories. DBVI will send OOS category information to SRC members following this meeting.

10:45 a.m.

VR Program Update-Susan Davis Payne:

SRC members expressed concern that consumer satisfaction surveys were not currently being conducted in a timely manner due to a vacancy at DBVI. Commissioner Hopkins alluded to the fact that the DBVI had asked DRS to conduct, rather than create the consumer satisfaction surveys and it continues to be an ongoing process. Additionally, the SRC has established a workgroup specifically designed to assist consumer satisfaction surveys and getting more intimately involved with the overall process.

11:00p.m. Comprehensive Needs Assessment-Susan Payne:

Susan Payne explained that she has been in contact with personnel from Mississippi State to assist the DBVI to conclude the CSNA by the end of the federal fiscal year. Dr. Brenda Cavanaugh will play a vital role to further establish and compile valuable data for the surveys. Mississippi State is well versed with DBVI programs and has a thorough understanding of how the DBVI conducts its business.

11:15 a.m.

DBVI/DRS Liaison Report-Jim Taylor:

Jim Taylor referenced his report which was submitted to the SRC prior to this meeting and indicated that it does not matter what a group is called, committee or work group, the Virginia Freedom of Information (FOIA) guidelines apply. He stressed that the FOIA guidelines are important for the DBVI SRC workgroups.

Jim also reported that DRS continue to have similar issues as DBVI in terms of getting appointments to their SRC council. Commissioner Rothrock confirmed that DRS is anticipating 2 million dollars in general funds this year and subsequently in years to come. These funds will essentially be used to help them with their match and to open order of selection. Once appointed, Ellen A. McIlhenny will serve as the DRS Representative on the DBVI SRC Council. The next DRS meeting will take place on 19 March 2012 and Jim Taylor is scheduled to represent the DBVI SRC.

Doug Powell inquired about the fact that the DRS SRC receives a very comprehensive budget analysis as to the agencies status and was wondering what it would take in order for the DBVI SRC to follow suit. Furthermore, Melanie Brunson proposed the notion of receiving more information as to how much and or what types of funds

are allocated to the DBVI SRC to help produce and sponsor programs such as outreach initiatives within the council. Susan Payne, Melanie Brunson, and Commissioner Hopkins will discuss various options on how to work through this request. The SRC requested that the DBVI include a budget section in the SRC agency report in order to ensure that the SRC is well informed about the DBVI budget and expenditures. DBVI will include a budget section in the June 2012 agency report.

11:30 a.m.

Ad hoc VR Policy Workgroup-Melanie Brunson:

Melanie Brunson and Susan Payne discussed the possibility of establishing a workgroup consisting of Mrs. Brunson and one other council member to assist the DBVI in terms of changes/updates to policy that pertain to the DBVI SRC council. Furthermore, the workgroup will play a vital role during the development and drafting stage of that particular policy on an as needed basis.

Action Taken: Unanimously, the DBVI SRC council decided that the current chair and vice chair would serve as the Ad hoc representatives moving forward.

11:45 a.m.

Workgroup Reports:

During the DBVI SRC Retreat, which convened on 2 March 2012 workgroups were established to focus on specific topics associated with the council. In addition, the workgroups and its designees were given an opportunity to briefly touch base and discuss strategies moving forward. The following workgroups were established:

<u>Annual Report</u>	<u>State Plan</u>	<u>Transition Committee</u>	<u>Legislative</u>
Marguerite Bardone	Marguerite Bardone	Michael Davis (Chair)	Melanie Brunson
Doug Powell	Valarie Walker	Rick Holley	Ken Jessup
Rick Holley	Jim Taylor	Debbie Pfeiffer	John Bailey
Debbie Pfeiffer	Melanie Brunson		
<u>CSNA Consumer/Satisfaction Surveys</u>		<u>Marketing & Public Relations</u>	
Doug Powell		Michael Davis (Chair)	
Valarie Walker		Marguerite Bardone	
Melanie Brunson		Melanie Brunson	

Angie Matney was given an opportunity to volunteer and become a member of one or more of the group(s) and she decided on the Legislative and Annual Report & State Plan workgroups. Council members not present during the March SRC meeting will be given an opportunity to volunteer for one or more of the previous mentioned workgroups as well.

12:00 p.m.

Working Lunch/Workgroup Reports Cont'd:

Transition Workgroup will work to provide data and program initiatives for high school students within the jurisdiction of the DBVI. Michael Davis will work with Nikki Jeffords and Debbie Pfeiffer to identify what the programs and initiatives are. Collectively, they will collaborate together to hopefully create successful and informative data.

Marketing & Public Relations Group plans to develop a listserv that will be distributed to legislators, news outlets, and Chamber of Commerce to establish and foster a great working relationship. In addition, they will work to develop a separate webpage on the DBVI website specifically designed for the SRC.

CSNA Consumer/Satisfaction Surveys decided to meet collectively with Susan Payne at a date and time TBA.

12:15 p.m.

VR Counselor Visit- Sara C. Mateyka:

Sara C. Mateyka, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor from the Richmond Regional Office was the honorary guest speaker at the DBVI SRC meeting. Mrs. Mateyka explained the day to day challenges associated with providing direct client services. Additionally, her official title is Transition VR counselor and she works with kids as young as 14, the age in which they become eligible for services. Specifically, Mrs. Mateyka explained the different types of transition programs such as the Summer Work and L.I.F.E. She also explained that building a strong rapport with families and the child receiving services is one of her biggest objectives when starting a new case. Mrs. Mateyka's current caseload number is 85, whereas the other counselors within her regional office carry a load anywhere between 50 to 60 individuals.

12:30 p.m.

Old Business and New Business:

The State Independent Living Council is interested in having a conference with the DBVI and DRS SRC. The purpose of the meeting is to establish a better working relationship in terms of decision making and ways to effectively share information.

Action Taken:

Ken Jessup will help facilitate gathering information as to how a member(s) of the DBVI SRC could attend the State Independent Living Council's meetings in the future. In addition, Mr. Jessup explained that he would be willing to distribute the minutes from the SILC's meetings until he is officially appointed.

Melanie Brunson explained that she represents the DBVI SRC at the advisory council for the Virginia Assistive Technology Services (VATS), which is scheduled to convene on 8 March 2012 at the DRS HQ's building. The group spearheaded an effort to revive a legislative proposal that would essentially implement a system in which technology provided to a student in high school, would follow that student once he or she graduated and moved on to college to help maximize its use. The bill is currently in the General Assembly, and a decision has yet to be made. Secondly, the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority, now doing business as the NewWell Fund established to provide low interest loans to specific individuals with low incomes that would otherwise be unable to afford loans. During the last Virginia Assistive Technology Services meeting in December, the program had only received a disappointing 2 applications. DBVI SRC council members with contacts that need the aforementioned services are encouraged to educate those individuals that qualify about this fund option. Melanie Brunson will inquire about any updates at the next staff meeting on 8 March 2012 and in turn forward that information to DBVI SRC Council members.

12:45 p.m.

SRC Member and Member Organization Update:

Valarie Walker expressed her concerns about her address being displayed on the Governor's website for DBVI SRC members and wanted to have this piece of information removed. Discussion ensued whereby DBVI staff

indicated that they could ensure that SRC member addresses could be removed from the DBVI website site but not from the Governor's website.

Action Taken: The council agreed that the street addresses of the DBVI SRC should be removed from the DBVI website and DBVI staff will take action to ensure that it occurs.

Date for Next Meeting/Adjournment:

The New Member Orientation will take place on 1 June 2012. The next State Rehabilitation Council Meeting will convene on 2 June 2012, location and time TBA.